

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division : Social Sectors Division, SERD

<b>TA No Country and Name</b> TA 3947-CAM: Sustainable Employment Promotion for Poor Women			<b>Amount Approved</b> \$400,000.00	
			<b>Revised Amount</b> \$400,000.00	
<b>Executing Agency</b> Ministry of Women's Affairs, Cambodia	<b>Source of Funding</b> Cooperation Fund in Support of the Formulation and Implementation of National Poverty Reduction Strategies		<b>Amount Undisbursed</b> \$2,049.09	<b>Amount Utilized</b> \$397,950.91
<b>TA Approval</b> 24 October 2002	<b>TA Signing</b> 17 December 2002	<b>Fielding of Consultants</b> 9 December 2002 30 November 2005	<b>TA Completion Date</b> Original: 30 April 2004 <b>Account Closing Date</b> Original: 30 April 2004	Actual: 30 Nov 2005  Actual: 13 March 2007
<b>Description</b> <p><b>Background and rationale.</b> Cambodian women have the highest labor force participation rate (82%) in Southeast Asia and play an important role in Cambodia's economic development, yet their socio-economic contributions remain undervalued and unappreciated. In 2002 the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA)<sup>1</sup> requested ADB assistance to promote women's status, improve their knowledge and entrepreneurship skills and advocate for gender equality in various government policies and programs. This assistance was to build on the previous support for gender and development in Cambodia, which included the formulation of the National Policy for Women and capacity-building support for MOWA to mainstream gender concerns.<sup>2</sup> The technical assistance (TA) enabled MOWA to strengthen its role as an advocate, catalyst and facilitator of gender mainstreaming and gender awareness at both the policy and grassroots levels.</p> <p><b>Objectives and Scope.</b> The TA's objective was to empower women economically, particularly the disadvantaged<sup>3</sup> through (i) strengthened capacity of MOWA and line ministries to mainstream gender and program activities to empower women, and (ii) promotion of employment opportunities and entrepreneurship skills. TA components were: (i) strengthening MOWA capacity in advocacy for economic empowerment of women, (ii) strengthening MOWA capacity in policy formulation and networking, and (iii) development of approaches and programs for strengthening women's employment opportunities. The TA reviewed MOWA's capacity and limitations as an advocate and facilitator of gender-responsive action; proposed institutional changes and organizational streamlining; developed a framework for micro- and small enterprise development; developed training materials, and conducted workshops and skills training for women.</p> <p><b>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</b></p> <p><b>Expected Impact and Outcome.</b> The TA's expected impacts were improved capacity of MOWA to define and operationalize its gender mainstreaming capacity at the national, provincial and commune levels, improved coordination with line ministries, provincial departments and women's centers on gender issues, and women's socio-economic empowerment through skills training, advocacy and entrepreneurship development. By the end of the project, MOWA had developed significant in-house capacity to mainstream gender and empower women by establishing an Economic Empowerment Team, which worked closely with the TA consultants.</p> <p><b>Expected Outputs.</b> The TA identified 11 expected outputs: (i) a situation analysis of MOWA management capacity, (ii) action plan for strategic planning support, (iii) action plan to strengthen English and computer skills, (iv) action plan for systems development, (v) systems and procedures for sector-wide management, (vi) a labor market information database, (vii) training materials on entrepreneurship and micro- and small enterprise (MSE) development, (viii) market research methodology and tools, (ix) strategic framework for MSE development and support, (x) line ministry strategies in support of economic empowerment for women, and (xi) networking among ministries, aid agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders. The TA was relevant in its support for Cambodian gender policies and plans.</p> <p><b>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities</b></p> <p><b>Adequacy of formulation.</b> The goal of strengthening the capacity of MOWA and empowering disadvantaged women was both relevant and necessary. It adequately addressed the socio-cultural constraints facing women due to the gender literacy gap, gender concerns in the market place, domestic issues, as well as women's increased mobility, all</p>				

<sup>1</sup> Formerly the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MOWVA).

<sup>2</sup> ADB. 1999. TA 3327-CAM: *Technical Assistance to Cambodia for Capacity Building for the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs*, for US\$400,000 approved on 8 December 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Disadvantaged women include widows, single parents, migrants, and at-risk working women.



of which are changing the nature of the family unit and increasing vulnerability to exploitation. The link between the goal and components was clear. However, the design did not (i) indicate how training needs will be translated into programs/activities for women's empowerment, (ii) indicate estimates for the number of women to be trained as well as the selection criteria for women trainees, and (iii) suggest any potential follow-up and potential avenues for further work in the area of women empowerment. The expected outputs, activities and inputs were adequate and measurable.

**Adequacy of terms of reference.** The terms of reference for both the international consultant and national consultants were clear and detailed. MOWA, as the executing agency, provided the necessary guidance to, and fostered good working relationships with, the consultants.

**Performance of consultants.** The TA recruited an international institutional development and management consultant and a national human development and training specialist. Aside from the late submission of the final report, other reports were submitted by the consultants in a timely manner. Overall, the consultants' performance was satisfactory.

**Performance of counterpart agencies.** MOWA provided excellent cooperation in implementing the TA. However at times their lack of capacity, in part due to lack of familiarity with ADB procedures, caused implementation delays. The 2003 general elections delayed the appointment of a new MOWA management team. Nevertheless MOWA provided timely inputs and participated actively in the TA's various workshops and activities. The line ministries were generally supportive of the TA; most notable were the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Rural Development, which established gender action units. Performance of counterpart agencies was satisfactory.

**Performance of ADB.** Review missions were timely and provided the necessary guidance in ensuring project progress. There were a total of four missions. The missions were useful in identifying the issues faced by the executing agency and project management unit, and provided guidance and suggestions for the resolution of issues, along with recommended actions for smooth implementation. At MOWA's request, ADB approved an extension of the TA closing date to compensate for the time lost during the 2003 elections. Overall, ADB's performance was satisfactory.

#### **Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome**

The TA's performance exceeded original expectations. Upon completion, it had (i) identified best models and practices in support of the implementation of the National Policy for women across line ministries, (ii) provided gender inputs to the formulation of the National Socio-economic Development Plan 2006-2010, Cambodia Millennium Development Goals, and *A Fair Share for Women* publication, (iii) trained 611 MOWA, provincial departments of women's affairs, and Women-in-Development center staff, and community women involving 28 workshops, and (iv) developed a pilot project for women's socio-economic empowerment that would eventually lead to a JFPR-funded *Women's Development Centers* project, which is set for completion in December 2009. However the TA fell short of developing a market research methodology. Overall the outputs were satisfactory and the expected impact and outcomes were met, as evidenced by improved MOWA capacity and acquisition of skills by women. The findings have been incorporated in the final report with inputs from ADB and government line ministries. The TA was efficient in achieving its outputs, effective in terms of its outcomes, and was timely in the delivery of its outputs.

#### **Overall Assessment and Rating**

The TA was highly relevant in aligning with the Cambodian Government's priorities on gender and ADB's Country Strategy and Program. Its objectives were largely met. As a new ministry, MOWA's capacity was rather limited; however, the TA significantly improved MOWA's organizational structure and networking ability as well as its capacity to mainstream gender in line ministries and provincial departments. The TA is therefore rated successful.

#### **Major Lessons**

- (i) MOWA's continued efforts in addressing gender concerns related to employment have now gained wider recognition in Cambodia. This was made possible through capacity building carried out under the TA and the momentum should be maintained.
- (ii) The general elections of 2003 resulted in TA delays created by the vacuum in MOWA's management. ADB should take account of a country's political calendar when designing programs and projects.
- (iii) Capacity building is important, albeit a slow process. The gains from increased capacity, exhibited in MOWA's Economic Empowerment Team, contributed significantly to the achievement of the TA's objectives.

#### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

Programs to empower women both socially and economically should be continued. ADB has provided valuable assistance through this and the earlier TA, and as well as through the ongoing Women's Development Centers Project (JFPR 9081-CAM). Other forms of assistance will be needed to help the Ministry not only in further mainstreaming gender, but also in developing advocacy for women's rights, improving their skills, and making women more competitive economically.